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Sustainable Procurement for Corporate Organizations When Incorporating Small Medium Enterprise Using Competitive Global Strategies in Gauteng, South Africa

Xhanti Dyonase
Operations and Quality Management
Durban University of Technology, South Africa
xhantid@dut.ac.za

Abstract

Sustainable procurement has become a pivotal strategy for corporate organizations worldwide, driven by a growing awareness of environmental, social, and economic responsibilities. In the Gauteng region of South Africa, where small and medium enterprises (SMEs) play a significant role in the local economy, the incorporation of these businesses into corporate supply chains has gained prominence. This abstract provides an overview of the research into sustainable procurement practices for corporate organizations in Gauteng, focusing on the integration of SMEs through competitive global strategies. This study aims to explore the multifaceted aspects of sustainable procurement and its implications for corporate organizations operating in Gauteng. It investigates the challenges and opportunities associated with incorporating SMEs into supply chains, emphasizing the need for competitive global strategies to ensure the sustainability and growth of these businesses. Key themes that will be explored include:

1. Sustainable Procurement Frameworks: A review of existing sustainable procurement frameworks and their applicability within the context of Gauteng's corporate landscape.
2. SME Integration: An examination of the barriers and facilitators to SME incorporation, emphasizing the importance of building capacity and fostering collaboration.
3. Global Competitive Strategies: Analysis of global competiti0ve strategies, such as global sourcing, supplier collaboration, and innovation, to enhance the competitiveness of both corporate organizations and SMEs.
4. Environmental and Social Responsibility: Discussion of the role of sustainable procurement in promoting environmental sustainability and social responsibility, with a focus on the Gauteng region.
5. Economic Impact: Evaluation of the economic impact of sustainable procurement practices on both corporate organizations and SMEs, considering long-term growth and resilience.
6. Policy and Regulation: Exploration of the regulatory environment and policy frameworks that influence sustainable procurement practices in Gauteng.

By conducting empirical research and engaging with corporate leaders, SME owners, and key stakeholders, this study seeks to provide insights into effective sustainable procurement strategies tailored to the Gauteng context.

Keywords
Sustainable Procurement, Corporate Organizations, Small Medium Enterprise

1. Background and Introduction
1.1 Research Problem
Corporate organisations encounter problems when they want to include Small Medium Enterprise (SME’s) into their FMCG supply chain environment. The general assumption is that SME’s lack in quality, quantity, and pricing, delivery, forecasting requirements, customer service and technological resources that enables real time interaction with corporate organisations. Therefore, there is limited information sharing between SME’s and corporate

organisations since corporate organisations use electronic systems that are not easily accessible to local farmers. Therefore, SME's encounter various challenges that hinders sustainable procurement such as quality specifications, scheduling, quantity requirements, service requirements and business documentation as required by the corporate organisations. Therein, SME's are under incorporated by corporate organisations.

1.2 Corporate Organizations and Local Farmers

According to Botes, Niemann and Kotze (2017), SME's are important incubators of entrepreneurship in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) supply chain environment. SME's collaborate with corporate organisations in the FMCG industry for various reasons including, job creation and community improvements (Angilella and Mazzu, 2015). However, corporate organisations require high level of participation in-terms of global competitive strategies: price, quantity, delivery, customer service, scheduling, product quality and forecasting (Ndyetabula, Sørensen and Temu, 2016). These requirements are in contrast to capabilities of SME's, particularly in South Africa. Lekhaya, Olajumoke and Nirmala (2017) state various challenges that SME's are facing to become part of a corporate organisations supply chain. These challenges are; (i) limited quantity production, (ii) poor quality control, (iii) lack of access to a marketing platform, (iv) limited credit access, (v) limited access to equipment and farming materials, (vi) lack of scheduling, (vii) customer service, (viii) delivery requirement. These challenges limit sustainable collaboration between corporate organisations and SME's (Pakdeechoho and Sukhotu, 2018).

Peters and Naicker, (2013) state that SME's are drivers of innovation and growth, thus providing business and source of living in the mainstream economy. However, with the aforementioned challenges, South Africa experiences a slow Total early-stage entrepreneurial activity (TEA), recording levels far below those of other economies in Sub-Saharan Africa. They further highlight the economic reality of sluggish growth, levels of unemployment and slow rate of social transformation. Magdalinah, (2012) agrees that South Africa is encountering social economic issues that hinders sustainable procurement collaboration with corporate organisations. Among these issues there is high unemployment rate of 27.5% (Trading economics, 2018). Therefore, formation of SME's is identified as source of reduction to poverty in the country and contributing to growth in the economy (Abo and Quartey, 2010). The National Development Plan (NDP) indicates that to escalate economic growth, SME's requires targeted support interventions from both public and private organization.

Touboulic, Chicksand and Walker (2014) also state that SME's have less capabilities to meet supplier requirements. For this reason, corporate organisations find it difficult to incorporate SME's into their supply chains. According to Pooe and Mahlangu (2017), a working relationship between SME's and corporate organisations can enhance the performance of their supply chain operations. In India sustainable supply chain collaborations is one of the important practice in supply chain management of fruit and vegetable (Blome, Paulraj and Schuetz, 2014). Major stakeholders, including the governments, have encouraged corporate organisations to comply with sustainable collaboration to improve procurement sustainability and corporate performance, particularly for emerging economies. When a corporate organisation forms a working relationship with SME's, the SME's can gain industry experience while the corporate organisation can make use of the products or services provided by the SME's (Lekhaya, Olajumoke and Nirmala, 2017).

1.3 Corporate Social Investment (CSI)

Corporate social investment (CSI) is a business approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits for all stakeholders including the organization (Mathews, 2012). The benefits to corporate organisations is tax rebates and Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) points when corporate SME's that are black-owned (Phitidis, 2011). The benefit to SME's is that SME's can gain business skills; job creation and preferential procurement to other organisations. Furthermore, through CSI initiatives, corporate organisations can develop SME's to directly incorporate them into their supply chains in order to supply them with required product or services. This is encouraged by the South African government to empower SME's through business development by the industry leaders (Phitidis, 2011).

Incentive alignment is a vital tool to facilitate collaboration between FMCG corporate organisation and SME's (Ndyetabula, Sorensen and Temu, 2016). In this way FMCG corporate organisations and the government should provide more financial and nonfinancial incentives to encourage sustainable collaboration (Shokriel. 2014: Huangetal., 2015). In addition, governments can incentivize both FMCG corporate organisations and SME's in collaboration with resources through tax exemptions, technical skills, BBBEE points and CSI benefits.

1.4 Supply Chain of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

According to Singh and Acharya (2013), FMCG supply chain is a network of organisations that incorporate different processes and activities. The poor performance of one organization can negatively affect the other organisations in the supply chain. In a FMCG supply chain, different organisations can work together to achieve the outcome of one organization (Bi, Davison and Smyrnios, 2015). However, there are typical challenges associated with the FMCG supply chain such as distribution of large quantities of time sensitive products. It is suggested by Singh and Acharya (2013) that supply chain organisations should be responsive to any supply chain disruptions. This is because supply chain disruptions can have a negative impact on supply chain operations of other organisations, this can result in the organisation not meeting their customer expectations. To minimize supply chain disruptions, FMCG corporate organisations use e-supply chain which has electronic capabilities to rapidly interact with supply chain partners to mitigate any disruption within the chain (Bi, 2017). E-supply chain can be suitable for corporate organisations with complex supply chains including large retailers such as Woolworths, Nestle and Unilever that distribute a wide range of FMCGs. This is confirmed by Unilever, a leading FMCG organisation which stated that 150 million of FMCG products are distributed to 150 countries, because people use these products every day (Bala and Kumar, 2011).

E-supply chain is a flexible method of integrating small enterprises into the supply chains of corporate organisations (Kellner, Otto and Busch, 2012). For example, in Australia, small enterprises are sharing product information, thus assisting the corporate organisations with purchasing decisions (Nguyen and Waring, 2013).

1.5 Procurement of Fast Moving Consumer Goods

According to Malhotra (2014), FMCG is defined as products, which are sold quickly, and with a small profit margin. Examples of FMCG products are; consumable products, non-durable and short-life span products. The competitive performance of FMCG organisations is linked with the ability of the organisation to manage and improve the working relationships with their suppliers; this enables organisations to establish a competitive advantage over their rivals (De Arajuo and Alencar, 2015). Furthermore, procurement has been identified as a strategic part of the supply chain. This is because, organisations have evolved and procurement is seen as a vital component in supply chain organisations; and many corporate organisations are starting to realise that competitive advantage can be gained through procurement (Dahwa, Al-Hakim and Ng, 2013).

1.6 E-Procurement

According to Monczka, Handfield, Giunipero and Patterson (2015), e-procurement is a process of buying products electronically. E-procurement aims to streamline buying processes where number of benefits can be realised including elimination of paperwork and improved communication between buyers and suppliers. Therefore, eprocurement can enable corporate organisations and SME's to apply Just-In-Time (JIT) supply strategy, minimise lead time and cost of carrying inventory (Kokemullei, 2018). This strategy requires good supplier relationship management, communication and information technology such as Systems Applications Products in data processing (SAP). This software assists corporate organisations to manage inventory in all areas of the supply chain. Mafini and Muphoshi, (2017), holds the view that, through collaboration, a corporate organisation can be able to make informed decisions in a changing the FMCG market environment.

1.7 Research Questions

1.7.1 Main research question

How can a FMCG corporate organisation and SME's collaborate for sustainable procurement in the supply chain environment?

1.7.2 Research questions

1. How can the SME's utilize global competitive strategies to maintain sustainable collaboration with FMCG corporate organisations?
2. What can the FMCG corporate organisations benefits from collaborating with SME's in the FMCG supply chain?
3. What are global competitive strategies that corporate organisations require from SME's to propel their competitiveness in the FMCG supply chain?

1.8 Primary Research Objective
To establish a sustainable, effective and efficient procurement operations for FMCG corporate organisations when collaborating with SME's for fruit and vegetables.

Secondary research objectives
1. To identify if SME's have capabilities to utilize global competitive strategies to meet the market requirements of FMCG corporate organisations.
2. To identify the benefits of the collaboration to SME's and FMCG corporate organisations.
3. To clearly understand the global competitive strategies that SME's can utilize to enhance competitiveness of the collaborations in the FMCG supply chain.

4. Literature Review
4.1 Procurement
Procurement is a crucial process in any organisation and should be done efficiently and effectively (Musau, 2015). Procurement is a process of purchasing goods and services based on the objectives of the organisation in order to meet the requirements of their customers (Mofokeng, 2012). The aim of the procurement process is to ensure that the right products or services are purchased at the right time, in the right quantities, according to the right quality standards and delivered to the right customers (Mofokeng, 2012). Dahwa, Al-Hakim and Ng (2013) explains FMCG procurement process as the acquisition of fast moving products at the right price, right time, right quality of the right quantity. This definition is in agreement with the definition which Mofokeng (2012) has proposed. However, Musau (2015) stated challenges associated with procurement such as; poor utilization of resources; lack of experienced employees and poor adaptation to technological change. According to Mgidlana (2013), corporate organisations have adopted e-procurement as technological advancement to automate buying cycles, which improves buying processes, supplier evaluation and can potentially strengthen collaboration within the supply chain. However, Mgidlana (2013) maintains that SME's are unable to collaborate with corporate organisations because they lack the required technology to integrate them into their supply chain.

4.1.1 Supplier evaluation
According to De Arajuo and Alencar (2015), organisations must have supplier evaluation criteria to ensure that they receive the right product or services at the right time, at the right place, with the right quality standards. If suppliers are unable to supply the required products to the quality and quantity specifications of the organisation, the poor performance of suppliers can have a negative impact on the performance of the organisation (De Arajuo and Alencar, 2015). Supplier evaluation is designed to improve not only the performance of an organisation, but also the relationship between SME's and the FMCG organisation (De Arajuo and Alencar, 2015). According to Naude (2013), cost, quality and delivery are usually used as supplier evaluation criteria for non-critical supplies. However, for critical suppliers, more important criteria such as: (i)-speed, (ii)-quality, (iii)-cost, (iv) reliability and (v)-flexibility are used as factors in the process of supplier evaluation.

4.2 Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)
According to (Malhotra, 2014), FMCG is defined as products that are sold rapidly and at low cost margin. Consumable, non-durable and short life span products are involved in the FMCG supply chain. SME's produce these types of products in the communities such as eggs and vegetables. Lekhaya, Nirmala and Olajumoke (2017:8) state's that SME's have been actively involved in growing chickens and vegetables for the purpose of selling them in the domestic market. This is because SME's lack production capacity and relevant equipment to produce eggs, chickens and vegetables in large quantities to meet the commercial market of corporate organisations (LouryOkoumba and Mafini, 2017). This is because corporate organisations are very strict to quality standards and lack of quality might affect the image and reputation of the corporate organization

4.3 Fast Moving Consumer Goods Supply Chains
Singh and Acharya (2013), define a supply chain as processes and activities that are undertaken by organisations to add value to the product. In an FMCG supply chain, flexibility is important, because organisations must be able to respond quickly to an ever-changing FMCG supply chain environment (Singh and Acharya, 2013). In the FMCG environment, there are many different products that are time sensitive. Therefore, corporate organisations adopt technological systems such as JIT strategy to improve their supply chain operations (Soto-Acosta, 2014:3).

Furthermore, most corporate organisations use systems such as SAP for data processing and order processing to efficiently distribute large quantities of products to the end users (Bi, Davison and Smyrnios, 2015). A SAP system can reduce order lead times and improve inventory management, which ensures few stock-outs through automatic order replenishment. Rao (2017) states that the system includes electronic data interchange (EDI) and Automatic Order Replenishment (AOR) and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), these programs are triggered by the actual sales in the retail industry from the point of sale, and therein inventory levels can be known for future order placements. Bi (2017) maintains that FMCG supply chain is complex and requires rapid responsive systems which are used by all role players in the chain for efficient customer response. This outlines the importance of buying and selling systems which are the key aspects in the FMCG industry.

4.3.1 Business collaboration using e-supply chain
Business partnerships should produce mutual benefits for corporate organisations and SME's (Bi, 2017). With e-supply chain, sustainable business relationships can be improved or developed (Arora, Arora and Sivakumar, 2016). According to Shi and Liao (2015), business partnerships empowers organisations to effectively coordinate their supply chain activities. Bi, Davison and Smyrnios (2014), supports this statement by stating that business relationships enable SME's to align their internal operations with corporate organisations through e-supply chain, leading to effective procurement pathway. However, SME's are faced with various challenges that hinder successful collaborations between corporate organisations and local farmers.

4.4 Challenges Faced By Local Farmers
This section outlines the supply chain challenges SME's are faced with, when a corporate organisations are considering to include SME's into their FMCG supply chain.

4.4.1 Limited resources
SME's have limited financial resources and cannot invest in modern technologies and equipment's (Skarpova and Grosova, 2015). This limitation leads to the failure of business collaboration between corporate organisations and local farmers.

4.4.2 Lack of access to the marketing platform
According to Skarpova and Grosova (2015), SME's lack knowledge and experience to access commercial market therefore, they are unable to market their products to corporate organisations.

4.4.3 Lack of entrepreneurial skills in the local farmers' business
According to Inekwe (2015), SME's do not have the necessary risk management capabilities, and the inability to manage uncertainty can have a negative impact on the business of a local farmers. According to Falkner and Hiebl (2015), the lack of entrepreneurial skills of SME's can create problems in such as communication barriers.

4.4.4 Credit access
SME's encounter lacks financial credibility for credit access (Angilella and Mazzu, 2015). SME's do not own substantial collateral to receive credit in the form of loans from financial institutions (Angilella and Mazzu, 2015). Therefore, SME's are unable to meet the banks credit requirements. Similarly, Yilmaz (2017) states that, the capacity of the SME's to play a role in the economy depends on the availability of funds to run the enterprise.

5. Research Methodology and Design
5.1 Research Purpose: Explanatory
Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) define explanatory research as the causal relationship between two variables. The research questions and the primary objectives posed in the literature review are explanatory because they require extensive research on the FMCG supply chain of corporate organisations when incorporating SME's into their supply chain.

5.2 Research Philosophy: Pragmatism
This philosophy outlines the "practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The research philosophy will help both FMCG corporate organisations and SME's to realise the requirements

and benefits when establishing the supply chain relationship with each other. The philosophy enabled the research to determine the practical solutions that support the research objectives.

5.3 Methodological Choice: Quantitative Method

Quantitative research method is based on a structured method of collecting and analyzing data gathered from various sources (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Quantitative study is preferably chosen for this study because it will use both questionnaires and structured interviews. This research method will assist the researcher by gathering numerical data to measure the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating SME's into FMCG corporate organisations.

5.4 Research Strategy: Questionnaire Survey, Structured Interviews

There were two different sets of questionnaires that were developed, one to understand the elements that corporate organisations deem important for suppliers in their supply chain and one to assess the capabilities of local farmers. The structured interviews were conducted to enable researcher to understand whether a working relationship between corporate organisations and SME's can be established. Structured interviews helped the researcher to clarify the questions to the interviewee therefore eliminating any misunderstandings.

5.5 Data Collection and Data Analysis

a) Units of analysis
The analysis is based on corporate organisations that are in the FMCG supply chain and the intensions of the corporate organisations is when incorporating SME's into their supply chain. The FMCG supply chains of corporate organisations considered for this study includes retailers, fruit and vegetable stores, wholesalers and restaurants. The research aims to establish a possible working relationship between corporate organisations and SME's who are in the eggs and vegetables supply chain environment. The research will further analyse the criteria, which was used by corporate organisations who wanted to incorporate SME's into their supply chain; the criteria included quality, quantity, production capacity, reliability and technology. This will assist the researcher to identify the research gap between corporate organisations and suppliers.

b) Population and sample size
The population was 78 FMCG corporate organisations that were identified through yellow page and are located in the Gauteng area. Furthermore, the population size is 120 for SME's that were identified through Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) and are located in Soweto, Tembisa, and Alexandra. The target population is corporate organisations and SME's in the eggs and vegetables supply chain environment.

c) Sampling frame and sampling strategy
The FMCG corporate organisations were selected at the discretion of the researcher and SME's were identified in Gauteng. The research utilized a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected through the subjective judgement of the researcher. Purposive sampling was used to enable the researcher to select the research participants subjectively according to the requirements of the research. Homogenous purposive sampling was used to assist the researcher to select the participants subjectively (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2015:3). The selection of a nonprobability sampling technique is also linked to limitations of time and financial resources. This is because the research participants are scattered all over Gauteng, which requires time and financial means to access them.

d) Sampling size
The total sample size is equal to 50, this includes corporate organisations and SME's. Breakdown, the sample size comprises of 20 SME's and 30 FMCG corporate organisations research participants. Representativeness is exclusive to the FMCG industry (Alvi, 2016:11).

e) Data collection instruments
The research uses both structured questionnaires and structured interviews for data collection (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The type of questionnaires that the researcher conducted are self-completed questionnaires having close-ended questions for the surveys. The other research instrument that the researcher undertook is structured interviews where the interviewer physically meets the respondents and ask questions face-to-face. The researcher distributed 50 self-completed questionnaires to FMCG corporate organisations and interview 50 FMCG corporate organisations. Additionally, the researcher conducted 20 structured interviews with SME's and distribute 200 self-

completed questionnaires to SME’s in Gauteng. Therefore, the research has two questionnaires: one for corporate organisations and the second one for local farmers. This helped the researcher to establish purchasing gap between corporate organisations and local farmers.

f) Data analysis
The research used both qualitative and quantitative data analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). This included numerical data that has been analyzed using charts, tables and graphs to explicitly analyze statistical data that provides deductive reasoning. Descriptive analyses (SPSS) will be used to analyze data based on the quality, quantity, technology, production capacity and documentation required by the corporate organisations for the incorporation. Additionally, descriptive analyses will be used to make graphical presentations on the purchasing gaps between corporate organisations and SME’s in-terms of quality and quantity.

g) Data quality: Reliability and validity
The researcher interviewed FMCG corporate research participants with credible knowledge on the procurement operations of the organisations to ensure reliability. In terms of the validity of the data used in the research, there are two concepts discussed. Firstly, internal validity distinguishes whether the research was constructed and done correctly to avoid confounding. The researcher aligned questionnaires with the research objectives to ensure compliance within the research criteria and measurements. External validity is the extent to which results can be generalized to other studies or people, however this research has a small sample which is not enough for the results to be generalized (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). These factors will enable the research recommendations to be adoptable in FMCG organisations in Gauteng dealing with eggs and vegetables that are willing to incorporate SME’s in their supply chain.

6. Conclusion and Proposed Framework

Despite other goals, the primary goal of the study, as adopted from Cardoza (2015) and modified, was to ascertain the impact of the important barriers on SMEs' market expansion in a setting that included both private and public institutions, as opposed to only public institutions. These barriers were access to funding, funding sources, to regulatory frameworks, and to market information. Additionally, the roles that both public and private organizations should play in reducing expansion barriers were established.

Unsurprisingly, the survey found that South African SMEs continue to face difficulties in gaining access to markets or contracts for purchases, capital, market intelligence, and an unfavorable regulatory environment. It is regrettable that this is still the situation 15 years after policies aimed at reducing these barriers was adopted.

The conceptual model developed by Cardoza (2015) for the market expansion of SMEs was revised in light of the research findings to represent the circumstances required to facilitate the market expansion of South African SMEs. In this paradigm, promoting the market expansion of SMEs is the responsibility of both public and private institutions, as opposed to just public institutions (Figure 1).

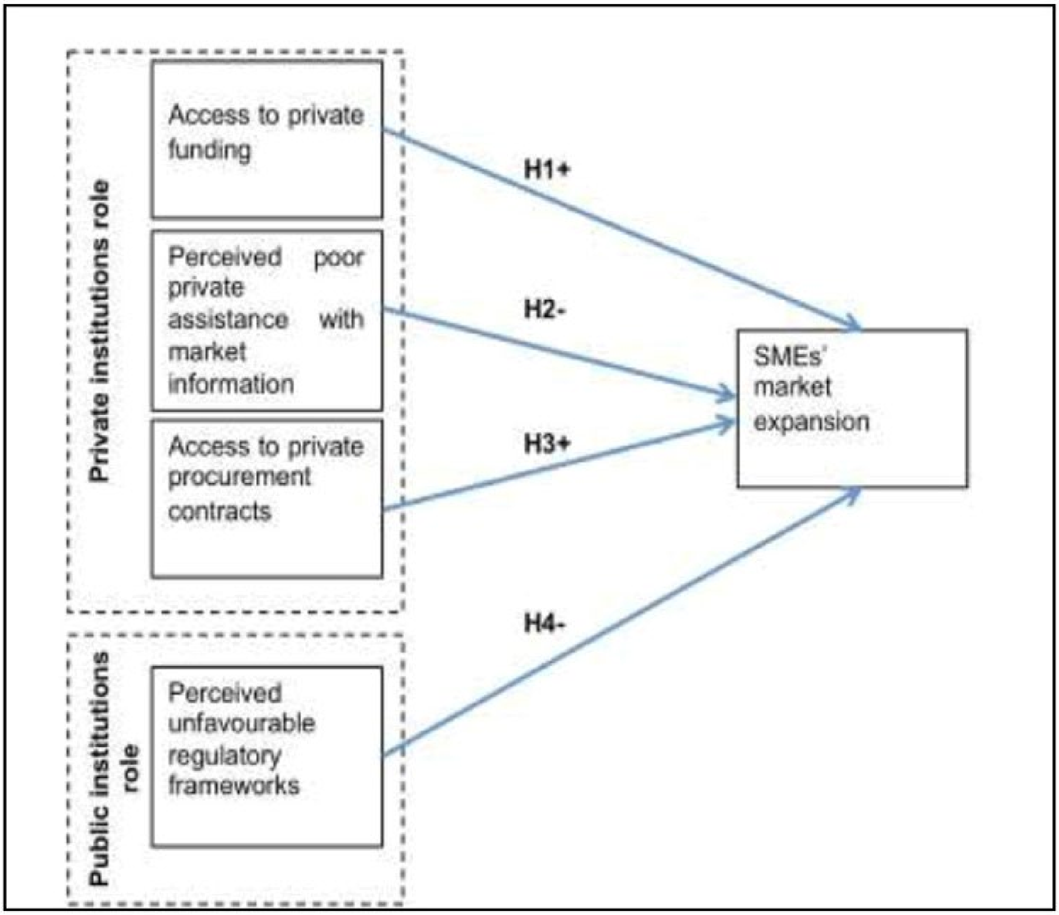

Figure 1. The conceptual model for SMES' market expansion

The study also showed that public institutions are ill-equipped and ineffectual for taking the lead in removing these particular barriers. The findings imply that access to private capital, private funding contracts, and access to market knowledge given by the private sector all help South African SMEs expand their market in some way. Additionally, despite the unfavorable regulatory climate, SMEs are nevertheless able to grow their businesses.

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